

Remarks

With entry of the present Amendment, claims 154-168, 170-181, and 212 are pending in the present application. Claim 211 is cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue the canceled subject matter in one or more continuation applications.

35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 154-168, 170-181, 211, 212 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The rejection alleges that claims 168, 211 and 212 are vague.

Claims 168 and 212 are amended. The amendments to the claims are supported throughout the specification including at page 36, line 17 to page 37, line 13; page 13, lines 3-15; and page 30, line 26 to page 31, line 7 of the specification. (Page and line number references are to the parent PCT publication, WO 00/25137). With respect to all amendments, Applicants have not dedicated or abandoned any unclaimed subject matter and have not acquiesced to any objection and/or rejection made by the Examiner.

Claim 168 is amended to clarify it is detection of the labeled non-immobilized antibody at a discrete position on the substrate, i.e. at the location of the immobilized antibody, that enables the monitoring of the binding of the antigen to respective antibodies and to first and second autoantibodies if present in the sample. Claim 212 is amended to clarify that it is detection of the labeled first and second antigens at the first and second discrete positions on the substrate that enables monitoring of the binding of the first and second antigens to respective antibodies and as such detect any autoantibodies in the sample.

As suggested by the Examiner, additional language to clarify the results observed in the absence or presence of autoantibodies is added.

Consideration of the comments provided above and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested.

Allowance of the claims as earnestly solicited. If a Notice of Allowance is not forthcoming, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Anne M. Murphy, USPTO Reg. No. 54,327, at 612.371.5267.

Respectfully submitted,
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